

I. PROGRAM MISSION AND OVERSIGHT

Effective Date: March 2007

Revision Date: January 2009

REFERENCES

Washington State Law, Regulations, and Policy

- RCW 41.04.005 "Veteran" defined for certain purposes.
- RCW 41.04.007 "Veteran" defined for certain purposes.
- RCW 73.08.010 County veterans' assistance programs for indigent veterans and families – Requirements.
- RCW 73.08.035 Veterans' advisory boards.

King County Department of Community and Human Services

- King County Veterans and Human Services Levy Service Improvement Plan
September 26, 2009.

1.0 **MISSION:** The mission of the King County Veterans' Program (KCVP) is to provide compassionate and high-quality services to veterans, service members and their dependents seeking to obtain living stability. Through comprehensive case management, financial assistance, support services and community partnerships the KCVP provides individuals and families with the opportunity to achieve their highest quality of life.

2.0 **CORE VALUES:**

Quality of life	The KCVP values a quality of life that includes the availability of basic needs and the freedom to pursue happiness.
Service	The KCVP values service delivery that is high-quality, accessible, equitable and competent.
Accountability	The KCVP values mutual responsibility between provider and client.
Partnership	The KCVP values effective community and professional relationships that strengthen the safety net for clients and improves all prospects for positive change.

Diversity	The KCVP values personal uniqueness that reflects inclusiveness and demonstrates diversity.
Integrity	The KCVP values a consistency of actions, methods, measures and principles that match the mission, values and beliefs as they are incorporated into all program functions.

3.0 **OVERSIGHT:** The KCVP is mandated by Washington State law RCW 73.08.010 and is funded by King County taxpayers. The KCVP has a Veterans' Advisory Board that is comprised of veterans from King County. The Advisory Board advises the county legislative authority on the needs of local indigent veterans, the resources available to local indigent veterans, and programs that could benefit the needs of local indigent veterans and their families. The board also provides a means of securing appellate relief for KCVP clients as part of the grievance procedure (*See Attachment B*). In addition, the Veterans and Human Services Levy Advisory Board reviews procurement plans, services, outcomes, program accessibility, funding decisions, and submits reports to the county council and the executive.

4.0 **PROGRAM HISTORY:** Formerly known as the Soldiers' and Sailors' Emergency Relief Act, the Veterans' Assistance Fund is one of the oldest laws in the RCW. It was originally established to provide relief to Union Soldiers of the Civil War and veterans of the Indian Wars who resided in the State of Washington. This act allowed each congressionally chartered veteran's organization within a county to manage its own funds within guidelines established by the state to war era veterans. Due to the increasing veteran population some difficulties arose in managing the funds. The solution was to consolidate the funds into one location which was established through each county in Washington State.

Since the 1950s, the KCVP has served low-income, homeless, and disabled veterans and their dependents. In November 2005, the voters of King County approved the Veterans and Human Services Levy to extend services to National Guard, Reserve, and active duty service members and their dependents. In August 2006, the King County Department of Community and Human Services adopted the Service Improvement Plan that also expanded services and funding for veterans, service members and their dependents in King County.

The intent of the Veterans and Human Services Levy is to help break the cycle of homelessness by expanding capacity to reach, engage and house the most compromised homeless veterans, service members and their dependents throughout King County. This has shifted KCVP services from providing emergency financial assistance to case management, support services and

personal engagement with trained social workers. Financial services may be used as a tool to help stabilize the lives of veterans, service members and their dependents in an effort to lead them to long-term living stability.

II. PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY REQUIRMENTS

Effective Date: March 2007

Revision Date: December 2008

REFERENCES

Washington State Law, Regulations and Policy

- RCW 41.04.005 "Veteran" defined for certain purposes.
- RCW 41.04.007 "Veteran" defined for certain purposes.
- RCW 73.08.010 County veterans' assistance programs for indigent veterans and families – Requirements.

King County Department of Community and Human Services

- King County Veterans and Human Services Levy Service Improvement Plan September 26, 2009.

1.0 **POLICY:** The KCVP requires an applicant to be a veteran, National Guard, Reserve, service member or their dependent, residing within King County or intending to move to King County within a 30 day period. The following definitions apply:

1.1 Veteran – “Veteran” is defined as any person, who at the time he or she seeks assistance, meets the following criteria:

- Served in any branch (Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, Marines, or Navy) of the armed forces of the United States, AND
- Fulfilled the initial military service obligation of at least 180 cumulative days, AND
- Received one of the following characters of discharge: Honorable, Medical, General, or Under Honorable Conditions (UHC).

OR

- Served in any branch (Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, Marines, or Navy) of the armed forces of the United States, AND

- Did not fulfill the initial military service obligation of at least 180 cumulative days, AND
- Received a Medical character of discharge.

OR

- Fulfilled the military service obligation of at least 6 or 8 years for National Guard or Reserve, OR was called into federal service for at least 180 cumulative days, AND
- Received one of the following characters of discharge: Honorable, Medical, General, or Under Honorable Conditions (UHC).

1.2 National Guard, Reserve or Service Member – “National Guard, Reserve or service member” is defined as any person, who at the time he or she seeks assistance meets the following King County Veterans and Human Services Levy Service Improvement Plan criteria:

- Has been called up under federal or state orders (including Article 10 or Article 32 activation), OR
- Is in the process of activation for duty, OR
- Is activated for duty, OR
- Has returned from duty.

1.3 Dependent – “Dependent” is defined as any person, who at that time he or she seeks assistance, is the legal responsibility and living in the household of the veterans, National Guard, Reserve or service member. *See Attachment A*

1.4 King County Residency – The applicant must be a resident of King County or move to King County within 30 days of applying for KCVP services.

III. CASE MANAGEMENT AND SERVICE DELIVERY

Effective Date: March 2007

Revision Date: December 2008

REFERENCES

Washington State Law, Regulations and Policy

- RCW 73.08.010 County veterans' assistance programs for indigent veterans and families – Requirements

King County Department of Community and Human Services

- King County Veterans and Human Services Levy Service Improvement Plan
September 26, 2006
- Case Management Model

1.0 POLICY: The KCVP case management and service delivery will be provided through a collaborative process between client and social worker based on client's needs, level of motivation, abilities and available resources. Case management services will focus on creating and/or maintaining housing, employment and living stability. Services will be provided in conjunction with county, state, federal and community resources. Services are not authorized based on request alone.

- 1.1 Housing Services – The KCVP provides a range of housing options including housing advocacy, coordination and placement assistance. Housing options are available via KCVP contracts with community providers, working agreements and other collaborations with housing community providers. *See Chapter 4*
- 1.2 Employment Services – The KCVP provides services to assist clients in obtaining and retaining employment. *See Chapter 5*
- 1.3 Life Stability Services – The KCVP offers support and assistance in identifying, advocating and referring to community service providers to assist clients in establishing and maintaining physical and mental well being. *See Chapter 6*
- 1.4 Financial Assistance – The KCVP provides financial assistance to prevent homelessness, resolve one-time financial emergencies and to address basic needs. The level of financial assistance provided will be determined by a sliding scale that is based on the assistance unit size and net income within the last 30 days and is limited within a rolling 12 month calendar. *See Chapter 7*

IV. HOUSING SUPPORT SERVICES

Effective Date: March 2007

Revision Date: December 2008



REFERENCES

Washington State Law, Regulations and Policy

- RCW 73.08.010 County veterans' assistance programs for indigent veterans and families – Requirements

King County Department of Community and Human Services

- King County Veterans and Human Services Levy Service Improvement Plan
September 29, 2006
- KCVP Contract Summaries

1.0 **POLICY:** The KCVP will provide housing support services through a collaborative process between the client and social worker based on the client's needs, level of motivation, abilities and available resources. Housing support services focus on identifying, obtaining and/or maintaining housing. The KCVP will utilize housing resources varying from shelter to permanent housing to assist clients in establishing living stability and to prevent homelessness.

1.1 **Housing Services** – The KCVP provides a range of housing services including men's shelter, transitional housing, Section 8 Housing Access and Services Program (HASP) vouchers, high-risk housing support, advocacy, coordination and placement assistance. Housing services are provided through KCVP contracts with community agencies, working agreements and other collaborations with community housing providers. Clients who do not receive placement through a contracted service will be provided information and referral to other housing or shelter opportunities. All KCVP referrals to contracted shelter or transitional beds are for male veteran or service members only. Referrals are not based on client request alone.

1.2 **Shelter Placement** – Clients may request advocacy and coordination of shelter placement to establish an immediate response to the need for short-term housing stability.

1.3 **Transitional Housing** – Clients may request advocacy and coordination of transitional housing placements to help them gain living stability and transition into permanent housing.

1.4 **Permanent Housing** – Clients may request advocacy, coordination and referrals to identify, obtain and/or maintain permanent housing. Clients are referred to rental units that are available at market rate and low-income

rates through community housing listings and low-income housing group waiting lists.

- 1.5 High Risk Housing Support – Clients at high-risk due to health, disability or unusual circumstance and who are financially eligible may be considered for motel voucher assistance as an immediate response to establish short-term housing stability.

- Motel Voucher – Clients may qualify for motel voucher assistance if all other shelter/housing options are exhausted.

V. EMPLOYMENT AND CAREER SERVICES

Effective Date: March 2008

Revision Date: December 2008

REFERENCES

King County Department of Community and Human Services

- King County Veterans and Human Services Levy Service Improvement Plan
September 29, 2006

- 1.0 **POLICY:** The KCVP will provide employment services through a collaborative process between the client and social worker with the goal of obtaining and/or maintaining self sustaining employment. As part of the case management plan social workers may assist clients with career development, job search, job placement and retention services. In addition social workers will access community employment services when appropriate.

- Employment related financial assistance is available based on client's case management plan and participation, and may include assistance with work related clothing, tools, transportation, etc. *See Chapter 7*

VI. LIFE STABILITY SERVICES

Effective Date: March 2008

Revision Date: December 2008

REFERENCES

King County Department of Community and Human Services

- King County Veterans and Human Services Levy Service Improvement Plan
September 29, 2006

- The KCVP Contract Summaries

1.0 **POLICY:** The KCVP will provide support, information and referral for services within a collaborative case management process between client and social worker to assist clients in improving their living stability. Life stability services will be provided in conjunction with county, state, federal and community resources. Services offered include, but are not limited to, the following:

1.1 Medical – Clients addressing acute, chronic or other medical conditions or disabilities shall be referred to appropriate community medical providers. Qualifying veterans will be referred to the Veterans Administration Medical Center (VAMC).

1.2 Mental Health – Client or social worker may request a mental health assessment through a referral to a community mental health provider. Acute cases should be referred for immediate care at the Seattle VAMC Emergency Room, Walk-in Clinic or Harborview Medical Center Crisis Triage.

1.3 Addiction – Clients or social worker may request a drug/alcohol assessment and/or treatment by referral to either Veterans Administration Addictions Treatment Center (ATC) or other community treatment providers. Clients with other addiction issues related to food, sex or gambling will also be referred to community treatment or self-help organizations.

1.4 Financial Benefits – Clients in need of financial benefits due to their disability or life circumstance are referred to community services. Social workers will assess the client's needs and eligibility for financial benefits from outside sources and provide support and advocacy for them in that pursuit.

1.5 Washington Department of Veterans Affairs – Clients who meet eligibility criteria for Washington Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA) programs will be referred when appropriate.

- Homeless Veterans Reintegration Project (HVRP) – Clients who are employable or employed may qualify for HVRP assistance with food, clothing and shelter.
- Incarcerated or Ex-Offenders Support – Clients currently in King County Jails (KCJ or RJC) shall be referred to Incarcerated Veterans Reintegration Services (IVRS) for assistance. Clients discharging

from Municipal (Auburn, Enumclaw, Kent, Issaquah, Renton) jails can receive IVRS levy services. Ex-offenders seeking services shall be assessed on a case-by-case basis with consideration of jail/prison post-release needs and planning.

- Veterans Conservation Corps (VCC) – Clients may be referred to either the volunteer or green collar career programs through a Veterans Academy partnership with Washington State community and technical college locations throughout the state.
- Veterans Innovations Program (VIP) – Clients are matched to the appropriate VIP fund and other programs services to ensure access to all veterans' benefits and the tools needed to provide for themselves and their families.

1.6 Community Voicemail – Accounts are available for clients in need of a voice mail box to better enable them to obtain services such as employment, housing or medical.

1.7 Community Services – Based on social worker's assessments of client's needs, clients may be referred to a wide array of services including:

- Employment services
- Housing programs
- Financial assistance
- Legal assistance
- Tenant's rights
- Medical care
- Mental health services
- Addictions treatment
- Benefits counseling
- Women's services
- Veteran's services
- Family programs
- Education and training.

VII. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Effective date: March 2007
Revision date: December 2008

REFERENCES

US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) – Income guidelines
King County Department of Community and Human Services

- King County Veterans and Human Services Levy Service Improvement Plan
September 29, 2006.

- 1.0 **POLICY**: The KCVP will provide financial assistance through a collaborative process between the client and social worker. Assistance will be based on the client's needs, level of motivation, abilities and available resources. Financial assistance will be utilized to assist the client with housing, employment and life stability. Financial assistance will be provided in conjunction with county, state, federal and community resources and will not be authorized based on request alone.

VIII. CLIENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Effective Date: December 2008

REFERENCES

King County Department of Community and Human Services

- King County Veterans and Human Services Levy Service Improvement Plan
September 29, 2006
- The KCVP Code of Conduct

- 1.0 **POLICY**: The KCVP will provide service within a framework of identified rights and responsibilities that will help ensure mutual accountability and integrity of services. The KCVP will inform every client of their rights and responsibilities while receiving services and post them publicly.

1.1 Client Rights:

- 1.1.1 The right to be treated with dignity, respect and privacy.
- 1.1.2 The right to receive services that do not discriminate based on gender, race, religion, national origin, language, age, disability and sexual orientation.

- 1.1.3 The right to be free of sexual exploitation or harassment.
- 1.1.4 The right to receive services in a timely manner.
- 1.1.5 The right to have all information and documentation kept confidential.
- 1.1.6 The right to receive appropriate accommodations due to disability or impairment.
- 1.1.7 The right to request a review of services provided.
- 1.1.8 The right to file a grievance about services. *See Attachment B*
- 1.1.9 The right to have a grievance addressed in a timely manner.
- 1.1.10 The right to not fear retaliation after filing a grievance.
- 1.1.11 The right to continue to receive services while a grievance is being investigated dependent upon the severity of the circumstances.

1.2 Client Responsibilities:

- 1.2.1 The responsibility to follow the KCVP Code of Conduct that is publicly posted.
- 1.2.2 The responsibility to complete required applications when requested.
- 1.2.3 The responsibility to provide current information and documentation required to determine program eligibility.
- 1.2.4 The responsibility to provide true and accurate information.
- 1.2.5 The responsibility to report other emergency or on-going financial assistance received.
- 1.2.6 The responsibility to only access services while residing in King County.
- 1.2.7 The responsibility to work cooperatively with the KCVP staff.

- 1.2.8 The responsibility to seek other available resources and services within the community.
- 1.2.9 The responsibility to actively participate in addressing identified goals.
- 1.2.10 The responsibility to report changes in household circumstances in a timely manner.

IX. BURIAL OF INDIGENT DECEASED VETERANS

Effective Date: March 1, 2007

REFERENCES

Washington State Law, Regulations, and Policy

- RCW 41.04.005 "Veteran" defined for certain purposes.
- RCW 41.04.007 "Veteran" defined for certain purposes.
- RCW 73.08.010 County veterans' assistance programs for indigent veterans and families -- Requirements.
- RCW 73.08.070 County burial of indigent deceased veterans.
- RCW 73.08.080 Tax levy authorized.

- 1.0 **POLICY:** As mandated in RCW 73.08.070, the KCVP “is responsible for the burial or cremation of any deceased indigent veteran or deceased dependent family member of an indigent veteran who died without leaving means sufficient to defray funeral expenses.” The total amount of assistance may not exceed \$500.00.

1.1 Eligibility (applicants must meet one of the following eligibility criteria)

- 1.1.1 Is a veteran who will or has buried or cremated a dependent family member; OR
- 1.1.2 Is the family member or friend of the deceased veteran who will or has incurred the cost to conduct the burial or cremation of said veteran.

1.2 Eligibility Exceptions



- 1.2.1 Applicants who have access to other financial resources (e.g. paid-in-full burial policy, life insurance policy, union/company death benefits) that cover burial expenses are not eligible for burial assistance; OR
- 1.2.2 Applicants who can demonstrate that the amount of financial assistance received from other resources is not sufficient to cover the reasonable cost of a funeral or cremation service will be eligible for burial assistance.